

REMARKS

In view of the following remarks and the foregoing amendments, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 were pending at the time of this action, with Claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 11, and 17 being independent. Claims 17 and 18 were allowed.

Claims 1, 3, 6, and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Wischermann (U.S. Patent No. 5,519,453).

Claims 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Hong (U.S. Patent No. 5,493,338).

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Wischermann (U.S. Patent No. 5,519,453) in view of Hong (U.S. Patent No. 5,493,338).

Claims 4-5, 8-10, 13-16 stand objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims.

Updated status of claims

In this response, claims 1-3, 6-7, and 11-12 are currently canceled. Claims 4-5, 8-10, and 13-16 are currently amended. Therefore, claims 4-5, 8-10, and 13-18 are currently pending, with claims 4-5, 8-10, and 13-17 being independent.

Claims 4-5, 8-10, 13-16 are allowable at least because these claims have been rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 35 U.S.C. 103, the rejections of these claims are now moot in view of the foregoing amendments. For at least these reasons, the Applicant requests a Notice of Allowance for claims 4-5, 8-10, and 13-18.

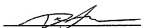
In Conclusion

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

No fee is believed due at this time. Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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